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GENERAL NEWS.

Henry Ward Beecher writes as follows in the Independent of the character of Parson Brownlow:—"He exhibits in his character a singular union of high moral and intellectual qualities with an almost unaccountable deficiency of that sense of the fitness of things which we call good taste. Thus, in his personal habits he is singularly pure: He never tastes liquor, never has used tobacco, never has seen a play at a theatre, and never has dealt a pack of cards—a remarkable record for a southerner. But when he opens his lips, his language although without positive profanity (except when quoting other mens'), is often so grating to polite ears that it saves sensitive listeners from blushes only because it irresistibly provokes to laughter."

W. W. Story, the American sculptor, has sent to the International Exhibition two works which are spoken of in the highest praise.—One figure is that of Cleopatra, and the other a Sybil. The London Times says that nothing has entered into the building which approaches them in originality of conception or power of execution. The Cleopatra, it will be remembered, is the statue so much praised by Hawthorne in "The Marble Faun."

Samuel Bowles, of the Springfield Republican, writes to his paper from London, that the temper of Europe towards America is now more menacing than ever, on both financial and political grounds.

Col. Daniel Edwards, who was arrested in New Orleans by the Federal troops for calling out "traitor" to Mr. H. M. Summers, on his appearance at the St. Charles Hotel, escorted by U. S. troops, was discharged by Gen. Butler. Col. Edwards excused himself on the ground that he had heretofore co-operated with Mr. Summers in the Southern cause, and that when he saw him apparently sympathizing with the party to which he had heretofore professed so strong an opposition, he could not restrain his feelings, but involuntarily exclaimed, "There goes a traitor." He added that, in using this language, he meant no disrespect to General Butler, or any of his officers. Upon this statement, General Butler released Col. Edwards.—Mr. Summers was present at the interview between Colonel Edwards and Gen. Butler.

We hear by this morning's mail nothing further of operations in James River. Passengers at Baltimore from Old Point, it is said, report that Gen. Barnsides, has taken Raleigh, N. C. But this is doubted.

President Lincoln returned to Washington, on Saturday, from his late visit to Fredericksburg.

War rumors continue, and are now, every day, more rife than ever. They ought, generally, to be very cautiously received.

In reply to a joint resolution of the General Assembly of Va., in session at Richmond, the Confederate authorities have stated they have no intention of abandoning Virginia; or withdrawing the army from the State.

At a public meeting held in Richmond on the 13th inst, Governor Letcher and Mayor Mayo declared that they would never surrender the city.

Gen. Wool has sent up a proclamation to Norfolk, notifying the people that so soon as they would acknowledge the supremacy of the Federal government, they will enjoy its aid, but while they remain in their present mood they will be cut off from all advantages of trade and commerce, and the city will be governed by strict martial law. He also assures them that no contingency can possibly arise whereby Norfolk will again be given up to the control of the Confederate authorities.

The N. Y. Express says that "notwithstanding the assertion to the contrary, the existence of an incipient negro brigade in N. Y., we are assured, is an established fact. The project of enlisting negroes for the military service of the government originated some four months since with Mr. Peter McDermott, formerly an officer of Gen. Sickles's brigade, and Mr. John Crignton, formerly Lieutenant Colonel of the Sixth Regiment N. Y. S. V. The matter has been laid before the War Department at Washington."

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal has been the past week again in full operation down to Georgetown. Boats with coal from Cumberland have arrived freely after the previous delay, and there is a good supply. The revenue for the week was about \$3,000, and the number of arrivals the past month 155, with supplies of breadstuffs, etc.

Alfred Stanly, a brother of Hon. Edward Stanly, provisional governor of North Carolina, was captured near Washington, N. C. on the 14th inst., by a party of Union cavalry.

All slaves in the Dutch West India Colonies will be set free on the 1st of July, 1863, under the following conditions: A compensation of three hundred guilders is to be paid to the owner of each slave—whether man, woman, or child—and the slaves are to remain under apprenticeship for a term of three years, during which time they are to be paid wages for their work, half of such wages to accrue to the government. The Dutch government will grant two millions of guilders per annum for emigration.

A correspondent of the Boston Journal, writing from Port Royal, says:—"Fifty thousand muskets and two thousand Zouave suits have been received for the negroes, and as soon as a few can be dressed in the new suit it is expected the enlistments will be rapid. But as far as I can learn, few seem to have any desire for fighting."

There was a great Sunday School celebration in Washington to-day.

In the ancient city of Amsterdam a curious contrivance is extant, worthy of mention.—From the top story of dwellings there is a tackle and fall by which furniture, &c., is drawn up. But the principal use to which it is put is the discharging and receiving of baskets of linen going to and returning from the wash. Washing is all done in the vicinity once in three months by the moderately well-off citizens, and once in six months by the wealthy!

Senator Grimes, of Iowa, urges an immediate arming and employing of the slaves of the South in the army, to relieve the white men in the service, alleging that out of five full regiments from the State of Iowa, only one thousand men remain.

The King of Prussia has come to grief. The election just held has resulted in returning an overwhelming proportion of liberal deputies to the incoming lower house. The last body was dissolved because it would not sustain the reactionary policy of the Von der Heydt ministry, but this election has fairly destroyed what little power the so-called conservatives had.

Thomas Gregg, of Collingsville, Pa., is said to be the originator of iron-clad vessels. He had a patent issued to him in 1814. He describes in his specification a vessel with angular sides "all around," covered by a deck to glance the projectiles of an enemy upward, while the shot striking below the apex of the angle, will be glanced downward.

President Lincoln has taken military possession of all the railroads in the United States, to be used in transportation of troops and munitions of war to the exclusion of all other business, when required.

The capture of two trains of cars on the Manassas Gap Railroad on Friday last, by the Confederates, is reported in the newspapers. An attack was made upon a train of wagons at Middletown, in Frederick county, and the assailants, it is said, were repulsed, but several of the wagons were captured.

Gen. Geary, at last accounts, was said to be about The Plains, twenty-one miles east of Front Royal.

The Washington correspondent of the Baltimore Sun says:—"The contraband matter has got to be so large a sized "elephant" that Secretary Chase has shouldered it off from himself, arguing that it is his business to raise money to support the government, and not to countenance a system involving a most wasteful expenditure."

Great excitement prevailed in Baltimore and Washington, on Saturday and yesterday, in consequence of the news from Gen. Banks' army. In Baltimore, several personal collisions occurred, and arrests were made. The police were active in preserving order. It was feared at one time something serious would happen.

The President and Cashier of the Union Bank of Tennessee, were arrested at Nashville, last week, on a charge of treason.